

**METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR DELIVERING
A STENT INTO A BODY LUMEN**

Abstract of the Invention

The invention is a method and apparatus for delivering a stent, including, but not limited to, a self expanding stent, into a body lumen. The apparatus comprises an outer tube having a proximal end and a distal end and sized to hold a stent therein in a radially constricted condition, an inner tube within the outer tube and having a proximal end and a distal end, and a holding element comprising one or more inflatable balloons carried on the inner tube at ~~or near~~ the location of the loaded stent. The balloon can be inflated prior to the procedure so that the balloon presses against the inner surface of the outer tube trapping the stent in its longitudinal position between the inner and outer tubes. Accordingly, the outer tube can be slid proximally to release the stent or distally to retract the stent back into the delivery device without the stent inadvertently sliding.

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